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Letter dated 30 September 2005 from the Permanent Representative of Cyprus to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I would like to draw your attention to yet another case of destruction of cultural heritage by the Turkish occupation forces in the occupied part of Cyprus. The incident, which is but the most recent in a series of similar occurrences, concerns one of the most important archaeological sites of the Neolithic period in Cyprus.

According to the Turkish Cypriot press, a 7,000-year-old archaeological site of unique historical significance, in the Karpas peninsula, recently suffered irreparable damage when the Turkish army levelled the hilltop on which the ancient settlement was situated. The purpose of this operation, for which bulldozers were used, was to place two flag-poles for the flags of Turkey and the so-called "TRNC", and to open up a new road nearby.

Excavations in the area were conducted in 1970 by Dr. Alain Le Brun on behalf of the French national Centre for Scientific Research. The excavations were interrupted four years later as a result of the Turkish invasion of Cyprus and the illegal occupation of the northern part of the Republic.

The great importance of the aforementioned Neolithic settlement is best documented in Dr. Le Brun's monograph, *Cap Andreas-Kastros: un site néolithique précéramique en Chypre* (Paris, Association pour la diffusion de la pensée française, 1981).

The Government of the Republic of Cyprus holds the Government of Turkey and its subordinate local administration in the occupied area of Cyprus responsible for the deplorable act of vandalism mentioned above. Such actions blatantly violate international conventions on the protection of the cultural heritage, contravene scientific ethics and cause indignation and dismay among Cypriot citizens. Protection of cultural heritage should be a matter of mutual concern and cooperation between the two communities; however, the Turkish side, in a lamentable display of arrogance and disrespect to the history and culture of Cyprus, opts to deliberately widen the gap by promoting its own political expediencies.

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On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus, I strongly protest the aforementioned deplorable act against culture and appeal to you to exert your influence over the Government of Turkey so that it may abide by its obligations, as emanating from the relevant international conventions, and refrain from similar provocations in the future.

I should be grateful if the text of the present letter could be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 19, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Andreas D. **Mavroyiannis**